

Astronomie No, 183

ST. PATRICK'S

Catholic Institute,

QUEBEC.

LECTURE

DELIVERED

BY REV. MR. KERRIGAN,

ON

Wednesday Evening, 26th April.

SUBJECT:—"Galileo and the Roman Inquisition."



QUEBEC:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE CANADIAN COLONIST, JOHN STREET.

1854.

Class - Religion & Charité

REV. JAMES K.

Catholic Institute

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Assistant Secretary, Boston.



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LECTURE

ON

BY REV. MR. KENNEDY

Wednesday Evening 28th April

Subject: "The Catholic and the Modern World"



ADMISSION FREE - DONATIONS WELCOME - THE LECTURE WILL BE HELD AT THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE

1881

Mr. P.

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LECTURE.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I appear before you this evening for the purpose of addressing you on a subject on which, among our separated brethren, the grossest ignorance generally prevails; which has afforded to innumerable declaimers and shallow misinformed writers, as they conceived, ample matter for making a successful onslaught against the Catholic Church. It is universally assumed by them, as an unquestionable fact, that Galileo was persecuted by the Court of Rome, merely because he defended the Copernican system, and endeavoured to upturn the old and erroneous one which had previously existed. Nor is it to be wondered at that such should be the opinion of those who look upon Rome as the mother of ignorance and something worse, when we reflect that history, especially history written in the English language, was, to use the expression of an eminent writer, for the last three hundred years, one vast conspiracy against the truth. I am well aware of the many deep rooted prejudices which exist on this subject, and of the obloquy to which I expose myself by distrusting the complacency of those who sneeringly point to Rome as antagonistic to science, and always jealous of the intellectual progress of the human race. It is really amusing to see the pompous airs which some men, stunted in intellect, and innocent of true historical knowledge, assume when they take occasion in their drivellings to refer to Galileo, the so-called martyr of science and victim of jesuitical intolerance. The voracity with which some Protestants, especially the vulgar sects, gulp down every lie and calumny, no matter how monstrous, against the Church, is really astonishing.

Nothing is too huge, nothing too disgusting for their capacious maw; every atrocity is fondly credited and tenaciously remembered which can inspire a hatred and nursery horror of the Court of Rome. There can scarcely be a doubt that if it were asserted that the present Pontiff renewed the war against science, and sent forth an army of monks throughout his dominions with orders to spike every telescope and dismantle every voltaic battery, the whole figment would be readily believed and afford a delicious *morceau* to the morbid appetite of the diseased religionist. It scarcely ever occurs to him to enquire what possible motives the Church can have for this supposed hostility to physical science. She surely could not fear that from the study of astronomy any objections could be deduced against transubstantiation, nor that chemistry and geology could overturn her belief in purgatory. Before I enter upon my subject I must observe that no Catholic is under the necessity of defending the acts of the Inquisition; no possible bond of interest can be assigned to connect us with its proceedings. In Italy it owed its origin to the pestilent heresy of the Albigenses, and therefore was established 1300 years too late for us to take any vital interest in it, for all we venerate in our hierarchy had its origin in the institution of Jesus Christ. I may also add that some of the most severe and vigorous attacks on the character of the Inquisition have proceeded from the pens of Bercartel, Cardinal Fleury, and other eminent Catholic Theologians. The famous decree of 1633, in reference to Galileo, does not pretend to be a dogmatic decree decisive of any point of doctrine, as we shall hereafter see; but even were it so, it would merely prove that those who were never gifted by Christ with inerrancy had erred. It was not to the seven Cardinals who drew up that decree that Christ addressed himself when he said: "Go teach all nations, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." The Sovereign Pontiff did not appear in the issuing of the decree; but even if he did, it would remain to be seen in what capacity he

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shewed himself, whether as a temporal Prince or as Bishop of the particular see of Rome,—the first among equals, or as supreme head of the Church, addressing himself to the nations of Christendom, commanding them “to captivate their understandings to the obedience of faith.” In the last instance alone would the decision take the form of a doctrinal decree; and even as such it is the opinion of a large section of divines it might be rejected until it should be accepted by the great body of the hierarchy. Now not one particle of all this appears. I advance a step further and I assert that it is the unanimous doctrine of Theologians now and then, that the Universal Church, could it be supposed capable of adopting such a decree, could not make it binding on the consciences of Catholics; and for this simple reason that it would pretend to declare a certain doctrine philosophically false. Now Christ did not promise to be with his Church teaching philosophy, but to be with it “teaching all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” among which assuredly the conclusions of philosophy did not form a part. I have entered into this explanation to show you how remote and slender is the tie of sympathy between us and the actors in this memorable transaction; how very far the conclusion, be what it may, that shall be adopted, is from implicating any one point of belief or practice to which as Catholics we are attached. In fact there is nothing more familiar in our history, both before and since the condemnation of Gallileo, than that the decision of the Inquisition should be rejected or reformed by the higher authorities in the Church. The Council of Trent itself has taught Catholics to place no implicit reliance on its awards and judgments, as may be seen in the case of Conanza. But after all, what has been the temper and feeling of the Church in reference to the Copernican views? How did she receive them? For if we were to be influenced by the statements of her enemies, we would have to conclude that she looked on the growing opinions with an eye of jealousy and mistrust, and that finally in the day of

Galileo this long pent-up jealousy broke out in open rupture, when she avowed herself the sworn enemy of the Heliocentric doctrine—that doctrine which is now taught so universally in her schools, and of which, had it depended on her, mankind would have never heard. (Applause.) Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, what must be your astonishment when I prove to you that it is to the Church of Rome that we are principally indebted for the new theory of the earth's motion; that in Rome it had its birth, in Rome was fostered and matured; that but for Roman auspices, the countenance of Popes and Cardinals, the adoption of the new theory had been thrown back, in all probability, to a distance which it would now be vain to attempt to calculate. Yes, I proudly assert, that it is to the Pontiffs, and the Dignitaries of Rome, that we are mainly indebted for the Copernican system. The first to broach that system in modern times was a Cardinal. Destitute, and a stranger, indebted for his very name to the obscure village which gave him birth, Nicholas the Cusan was gifted with the most brilliant talent, the most soaring genius, and this was sufficient to open to him the road to the highest preferment in that Church and nation, which it is the fashion to decry as the enemies of all mental improvement. But in what particular department of science did this great man distinguish himself? He departed from the received opinions of his times. He advanced in the teeth of the much exaggerated peripatetic dogmatism of the day the startling proposition that “the Earth moves, the sun is at rest,” and he answered the objections, as they have ever been answered, by contending that the illusory impression rises from the same cause which makes a person in a ship in motion fancy the objects on shore to be receding from him; and these views he proclaimed to the world as best he could. He even carried them to the foot of the Pontifical throne, by inscribing them to his former preceptor, Cardinal Cosarini. Was he visited with persecution? Did the thunders of the Vatican break over the head of this audacious man? Was the majesty of

the Church insulted by this astronomical innovation? Nicholas the Fifth, a most illustrious Pope, and great Patron of learning, honored him with his most intimate friendship; raised him to the dignity of the Cardinalate, and always evinced towards him the highest marks of respect and esteem. He was intrusted by four successive Pontiffs with the most delicate affairs and important legations, and he continued in favor with the Court of Rome, without one moment's interruption, to the close of his valuable life, in the year 1464. Nor were the works of the good Cardinal allowed to go down with him into the oblivion of the tomb. It was one of the first tasks of the Italian Press to diffuse and perpetuate them, under the sanction of another exalted name, that of Cardinal Ambroise. In the year 1500, Copernicus, who occupied a professor's chair at Rome, gave lectures on the new theory, to overwhelming crowds, who flocked to hear him, and yet there was no opposition. On the contrary, after his retirement from the duties of his professorship, ample means were provided for him, by which he was enabled, in an honorable retreat, to devote all the energies of his great mind to the reconstruction of the whole fabric of astronomy. From the banks of the Vistula he turned for protection to the only spot on earth where he could hope to find minds sufficiently enlarged and enlightened to give a favorable hearing to his exposition of that system, in the study of which he had spent years of the most intense application. He was well aware of the difficulties that beset his path. He too well knew that his new doctrines would clash with those deep-rooted prejudices which had existed for ages. He dedicated his new work on the revolution of heavenly bodies to Paul III, and the successor of Saint Peter flung over the infant theory the shield of his high protection, and secured to it eighty years of uninterrupted tranquillity and peace. But this was not all. Seven years before the publication of his great work a rumour was current that want of pecuniary means and fear of attacks from the scrupulous religionist prevented him from giving publi-

city to the result of years of laborious study. Cardinal Scomberg nobly came forward, bade him dismiss his fears, and instantly supplied him with the requisite funds. At the death of this good man, who may truly be styled a Christian Mocenas, the Bishop of Ermeland succeeds him as patron of the system, and the new book soon appears, dedicated to and approved of by the first authority in the Catholic world, (applause.) From all this, you may perceive, Ladies and Gentlemen, that it is to the fostering care of the Church that the world is indebted for the new system; that a Catholic Ecclesiastic was its first discoverer; and that once ushered into life it was taught with applause in all the Italian Universities. In the Roman College of which Bellarmine was Principal, the distinguished Jesuit Tonquato, and in the Sapiensa, also at Rome, another Jesuit delivered lectures in support of the Copemican system. How different the conduct of the highest dignitaries in the Catholic Church from that of the cotemporary Protestant Theologians. John Kepla, an honest Luthevinian, was subjected to the greatest annoyance of the divines of Tuburgen for having advocated the new system. These Protestant divines publicly condemned and branded him as a heretic, and persecuted him so much that he was at last obliged to fly his native country, and seek protection in the land of the stranger. And where think you did he obtain that protection? Who received the poor outcast? Who in the darkest hour of his affliction opened to him the door of hospitality, and caused his bright genius again to soar amid the stupendous wonders of the solar system. Let the Protestant historian Wolfgang Mensel, who was his intimate friend, answer the question. It was, says he, the Jesuits at Gratz who afforded him an asylum, where secure from the malignity of his coreligionists, he could indulge without danger in the development of his favorite theme. As a further illustration of Papal hostility to science, he was afterwards called to fill the chair of astronomy, vacant in one of the Pope's Universities. Well

indeed might be acclaim, in the words of one of England's greatest bards—

"Oh Rome, my Mother, City of the Soul!
"The Orphans of the heart must turn to thee."

[Applause.]

Having now proceeded so far, I beg leave to call your attention to the illustrious man, whose imaginary wrongs and woeful persecutions by the Roman Inquisition have been so frequently laid before the American public by bigoted sectarian writers, by spouting declaimers, and miserable little dabblers in historical lore, whose only knowledge has been gleaned from tainted sources, and whose minds are saturated with all the lies and calumnies which uncandid men could devise to bring the Church of God into derision and contempt. No sooner had Galileo directed his great discovery, the telescope, to the heavens, than he determined to go to Rome as to the place where with the best prospects to science he could first make known those startling revelations which it now became his exalted privilege to proclaim to the world. In vain did the Court of Florence use its every effort to induce him to, at least, postpone his visit. He was determined to unfold his views in the capital of the Christian world, by which means he expected they would be more speedily and widely diffused. Nor was he disappointed; his ardent expectations were more than realized. His reception was of the most splendid and flattering description; every grade of society vied with each other in heaping honors upon him, and no efforts were spared by the citizens of Rome to testify their deep respect and reverential homage to this child of genius and ornament of Italy. Buoyed up and emboldened by the splendid reception which had been given him in Rome, in 1612, he most unwisely began to raise the uncalled for question of the reconcilability of the scripture texts with the new theory, and to this course he clung with the most desperate tenacity, under the double persuasion that the system demonstrated, and

that to him belonged the honor of having furnished that demonstration from the flux and reflux of the tides. I need scarcely observe that this double assumption is now recognized by all astronomers to be entirely false and ungrounded. The new system was by no means demonstrated by Galileo, for as Delambre justly observes, "Despite the immense progress which astronomy had made, have the moderns themselves been able to allege any direct proof of the diurnal motion of the earth previous to the voyage of Richer to Cayenne, where he was obliged to shorten the pendulum? Have they been able to discover one positive demonstration to the point to prove the annual revolution of the earth before Romur measured the velocity of light and Bradley had observed and calculated the phenomena of aberration? Previous to these discoveries and to that of Universal Gravitation (made many a long year after Galileo) were not the most decided Copernicans reduced to mere probabilities, were they not obliged to confine themselves to preaching up the simplicity of the Copernican system, as compared with the absurd complexity of that of Ptolmey, (applause.) From this, Ladies and Gentlemen, you may perceive that the system was not demonstrated. Let us now proceed to examine the grounds of his confidence in the new views. Most modern writers would have us believe that it arose from the light which the first telescopic glimpse of the heavens let in on our system, particularly by the discoveries of the phases of Venus and the satellites of Jupiter. Now, nothing can be more false than this assumption. In 1610, the phases of Venus and other planetary wonders were discovered. In 1597, Galileo assures Kepler of his settled conviction of his favorite system, and towards the end of his life, in a letter to one of his pupils, he avows that he was led to this opinion by the facility which he conceived it afforded him in explaining the mystery of the flux and reflux of the tides. This was his favorite hobby, the crowning proof beyond which evidence could not possibly go. Compared to it the

phases of Venus and all the other wonders of 1610 were as nothing. In 1616, when he stood the second time before the Inquisition, in 1623, and also in 1633, when he was condemned, he puts forward this as his main argument. Having thus erroneously persuaded himself that he had demonstrated the earth's motion he began to make a vigorous preparation for removing the remaining impediment, as he conceived, in the way of its general adoption, namely, the scriptural difficulties. In pursuance of the unwise purpose of raising the question as to the value of scriptural objections against his system, he commences that series of theological epistles, the first of which he addressed to Castelli, and this letter formed the sole ground of the impeachment brought against him in 1616. One Loreni, a Dominican, contrived by some means to get hold of a copy of this letter, and forthwith proceeded to Rome to lay his complaint before the Holy Office. The Inquisition, peremptorily demanded the production of the original, it could not be produced and the designs of the denouncer were therefore frustrated. The correspondence of the principal persons on this occasion which has come down to us reveals the temper of the tribunal in question, and the light in which they were disposed to look on the whole affair. Immediately after the denunciation, on the last day of February, 1616, Campioli the friend of the accused writes to say that the sentiments of Cardinal Barberini on this point were "that Galileo should not travel out of the limits of physics and mathematics, but confine himself to such reasons as Ptolemy and Copernicus used, because declaring the views of scripture the Theologians maintain to be *their* particular province. On the 21st of March, when the proceedings were at their height, the same writer again addressed his friend: "I have been this morning, together with Monsignor Dine, to the Cardinal del Monte, who told us he had lately a conversation with Cardinal Bellarmine on the subject of the new opinions, and that the conclusion was that by confining himself to the System and its demon-

stration without interfering with the scriptures, the interpretation of which they wish to have confined to Theological Professors, approved and authorised for the purpose, Galileo would be secure against any contradiction; but that otherwise explications of scripture, however ingenious, will be admitted with difficulty when they depart from the common opinion of the Fathers."

On the 25th of the next month, when the case had been dismissed, Bishop Dine testifies to "Bellarmine's having remarked to him that there was no question about Galileo, and that by pursuing the course mentioned, that of speaking as a mathematician, he would be put to no trouble." Thus terminated the first judicial enquiry which, by many, is confounded with the second, which took place the following year. So little, indeed, did the authorities at Rome wish to have any collision with the new doctrines, that, at the very moment when they are accused of attempting to crush them by means of the Inquisition, the famous Jesuit Torquato is delivering lectures in the Roman College in favor of the Copernican system. Galileo is congratulated by his friends that his affairs are now settled; but nothing, the most pressing solicitations of his friends, could prevent him from forcing the matter on again. He completes the last and most formidable of his polemical epistles, and sends it to the Court of Florence, thereby stamping it with the impress of royal authority. He then proceeds to Rome, unsent for, incited of his own free will, "to know," as he says, "what he should believe on the Copernican system." If it were necessary, I could here adduce innumerable and unquestionable testimony to prove that he was not forced to go. He was again received most kindly by the authorities. Here are his own words: "My affair has been brought to a close so far as I am individually concerned. The result has been signified to me by all their Eminences the Cardinals, who manage these affairs, in the most liberal and obliging manner, with the assurance that they had felt, as it were with their own hands, no less my candour and sincerity than the diabolical malignity

and iniquitous purposes of my accusers, so that, as far as I am personally concerned, I might return home at any moment." But he would not so return; he must needs dabble in Theology; he will not rest content until his opinion is declared in accordance with Scripture. Having obtained from his Court letters to Cardinal Ossini, he commences the work by that everlasting argument: the flux and reflux of the tides. The Cardinals were actually wearied out with the matter, and paid very little attention to it. At last, at a very inopportune moment, when the Pope and Cardinals were engaged in one of their largest Congregations, in some very important discussion, Ossini most unwisely interferes to force on Galileo's question. The Pontiff reprimanded him, but he still perseveres; and then, and not till then, did the Pope threaten to send the whole matter before the Inquisition. Bellarmine is sent for; a special congregation to examine the subject is summoned, but, after all, what was the decision arrived at? It was merely declared that "it appeared to be contrary to the sacred scripture." And this account we have from a man who assisted Galileo in his cause, and who wrote this account in Rome for the philosopher at his own special request. It was then deemed prudent to impose a complete silence in regard to the subject on the philosopher himself; since he would not be confined within the bounds of philosophy, but needs must enter on forbidden ground and even this step was not taken but in the last resort. Bellarmine was commissioned to intimate their decision, and attempt by every friendly persuasion to engage him to give up agitating the question, and inform him if he had a mind to hold those opinions, to hold them in peace; but after the failure of this expedient the public notary and witnesses were called in and he was judicially bound to silence. He was, however, furnished with a certificate to the effect that they did not visit him with their displeasure, but left him to the enjoyment of his opinions—opinions once more not deemed heretical. The Pope admitted him to a long and friendly interview, and dismissed him with every demonstration of favor

and regard. (Applause.) This, Ladies and Gentlemen, to give the law to the interpretation of the Scripture. He was left in the enjoyment of his opinions, but in doing so reduced as an ecclesiastical precaution to an to give the law to the interpretation of the Scripture. He was left in the enjoyment of his opinions, but in doing so reduced as an ecclesiastical precaution to an absolute silence. The Copernican system was not attacked, for scarcely did this proceeding take place when the chair of astronomy, vacant in the Pope's University, was conferred on the illustrious Kelper, an unmeasurably more efficient supporter of the new system than Galileo himself. Galileo, therefore, was silenced on account of his extreme intemperance in the matter, and this attested by the Ministers of that Court which respected and idolised him, who were resident on the spot, and who dare not misrepresent him, "Galileo," says he, "makes more account of his opinion than that of his friends, and I so far as lay in my power, together with many Cardinals of the Holy Office have tried to persuade him to keep himself quiet, but if he had a mind to hold his opinion, to hold it in peace. He is heated in opinion, and displays an extreme passion, but with little prudence or strength of mind to know how to govern it. He is passionate in this affair and altogether blinded, as to how he should act, and will remain so, as he has hitherto done, bringing himself, and any one else who will be fool enough to second his views or be persuaded by him, into dangers. He is vehement obstinate and passionate, so that it is impossible for any one around him to get out of his hands." Surely then it was no wonder that steps should be taken to reduce him to an opportune silence, lest the sacred character of the Scripture should be desecrated and profaned. He returns to his own Florence, and his departed spirit is at length at rest. Shortly after Cardinal Barberini mounts the Pontifical throne, and all the friends of Galileo immediatly receive the highest honors, and are raised to the most distinguished situations. Galileo returns to

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Rome to congratulate his friend on his recent elevation to the chair of St. Peter. Urban loads him with honors, and something more substantial in the shape of a liberal pension both to himself and his son. Throughout the Roman Court it is openly asserted that the Geocentric doctrine is not a matter of faith, that the opposite is not hereay. The Pope even expresses himself in similar terms. Galileo's restless mind is again elevated. He, in express violation of the injunction which was placed on him in 1616 comes out in a pamphlet, in which he ridicules his opponents in the most sarcastic and insulting terms, and gives the whole preponderance of argument to the supporters of his own favorite theory. Yes, and he wantonly outrages every feeling of gratitude, by pointedly alluding to Urban, his patron, friend and benefactor. Hear what a staunch, but enlightened, Protestant philosopher says on this point. I quote the words of one of the greatest ornaments of British Science, Sir D. Brewster: "Whatever allowance we may make," says he, "for the ardor of Galileo's temper and the peculiarity of his disposition, and however we may justify and even approve his conduct, his visit to Urban the 8th in 1624, placed him in a new relation to the Church which demanded on his part a new and corresponding demeanour. The noble and generous reception which he met with from Urban, and the liberal declaration of Cardinal Hohensoller on the subject of the Copernican system, should have been regarded as expressions of regret for the past and offers of conciliation for the future. Thus honored by the head of the Church, and befriended by his dignitaries, Galileo must have felt secure against its lesser functionaries, and in the possession of the fullest license to prosecute his researches and publish his discoveries, provided he avoided that dogma of the Church which even in the present day it is not ventured to renounce. But Galileo was bound to the Roman Hierarchy by even stronger ties. His son and himself were pensioners of the Church and having accepted its alms they owed to it at least a decent and respectful allegiance. The pen-

sion thus given by Urban was not a remuneration which sovereigns sometimes award to the services of their subjects. Galileo was a foreigner at Rome. The Sovereign of the Papal States owed him no obligation, and hence we must regard the pension of Galileo as a donation from the Roman Pontiff to Science itself, and as a declaration to the Christian world that Religion was not jealous of Philosophy." This, it must be admitted, is strong testimony in favor of the Roman See from a man whose thorough Protestantism cannot be questioned, and who would most certainly have taken high grounds against the Church if he possibly could have done so in candour. By the publication of the pamphlet I have alluded to, the authority of the Inquisition was set at naught, and ostentatiously trampled under foot. Then it was that steps were taken to vindicate the violated order of 1616, for it is false to assert that the severity with which Galileo was visited was attributable to hostility to Science or to the doctrine of the earth's motion. All the inconvenience he underwent was brought on by his disengenuousness, his pride, his insulting and ironical language. He was not brought to the Bar of the Inquisition for teaching astronomy, but for violating, with very aggravating circumstances of ingratitude, sarcasms and artifices unworthy of him, a solemn injunction of the Inquisition, that left him and his science free as air, and sought only to protect the Word of God itself from the danger of being abused. We have direct and positive authority for asserting that the Inquisition solely examined him on the license and approbation of his book. They asked him why he had not informed the Master of the Sacred Palace, as he was bound to do, of the order of 1616. His reply was that he thought it unnecessary and useless. And, in this, says the historian, lay his fault; even one of his ardent supporters, one well acquainted with all the particulars of the trial, assures us that the violation of the order of 1616 was the sole cause of the proceedings of 1633. During the whole of this trial, Galileo was treated with the most marked indul-

gence. "He stood there," as I read in Harper's *Martyrs of Science*, "with the recognized attributes of a sage, and, though an offender against the law of which they were the guardians, yet the highest respect was yielded to his genius, and the kindest commiseration felt in his infirmities." But, again, it may be asked was it not declared a heresy? Does not the decree of the Inquisition describe it as such? I answer, the word heresy used in the decree of 1633, is to be taken in a wide and technical sense. And this is evident, both from the language of Pope Urban, in whose reign the decree was issued, and even from Galileo himself. "No," says Urban, "the Church has not condemned that system, nor is it to be considered as heretical." Galileo speaks of it, with the consent of the Court, as only condemned *ad interim*, that is, not to be taught in its absolute form until proved to be true. In the formulary of abjuration, it is described as a heresy; but that expression, in the Acts of the Roman Tribunal, is applied to any sentiment or act contrary to the obedience of faith. The Roman Inquisition was primarily established against the pestilent heresy of the Abligenses, and, by a natural adaptation of terms, names every act that comes before it a "heresy;" even offences not at all against faith. Nay, matters of fact, which have nothing at all to do with opinion, and this may be seen in the Directory of the Inquisitors, published years before the time of Galileo, by Nicholas Eymerick. (Applause.) This, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the authentic account of that persecution with which the Catholic Church has been so often, even to the present day, upbraided; and I have selected this subject for this evening's lecture, for the purpose of rebutting a calumnious and utterly ungrounded indictment. I could, if it were necessary, and if time permitted, bring forward a larger amount of authentic and cotemporary evidence to sustain me in indignantly and scornfully flinging back that charge, which unscrupulous, or, to use the mildest terms, ignorant men would fain make good against the Church. I could have selected other subjects in the treatment of

which it would have been easy for me to have delighted you more, but then, perhaps, I would have instructed you less.

It is really astonishing what retentive memories some people are blessed with when they take occasion to refer to Italy and especially to its Capital. All that the malice of man ever invented against the Roman See is remembered in its most trifling detail. Nothing is forgotten. Every exploded calumny is from time to time again raked up and presented under a new dress to the virtuous indignation of the Anti-Catholic world. Religious fanatics speak of Rome as opposed to science, as always desirous to limit the boundaries of human knowledge; but they very prudently forget to add that the most horrible, bloody and barbarous code of laws ever enacted for years disgraces the Statute Book of Protestant England. Laws which warred with all science, which made ignorance under the heaviest penalty compulsory on the Irish people, and nefariously proscribed a whole nation's mind, made it felony for the Professors of the religion of their fathers to get taught at home, and double felony to get taught abroad, which doomed to strangulation, or the galleys, the unfortunate Catholic School Master who would dare to impart the rudiments of knowledge to the infant mind. They jeeringly talk of Rome and her ignorance, of Galileo and Copernicus, but it never once enters their thoughts to mention the reason which prevented free and enlightened Englishmen from adopting the important and necessary improvements made in the Calendar by Gregory the 13th, and to which Copernicus so much contributed. Can it be denied that this reluctance solely arose from downright bigotry and sheer hostility to science through religious hate, the very same motives which actuate semi-barbarous Russia in her non-acceptance even to the present day. Truly was it observed by a judicious writer, that Englishmen would rather quarrel with the whole host of heaven than agree with the Pope in his computation of time. It was a mortifying but just humiliation to

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them when they were at last obliged to adopt the reformed Calendar and call in the aid of a Catholic Prelate, the good and illustrious Bishop Walmsley. Who persecuted for science John Kepler? Who persecuted for science Descartes? Who banished and condemned as a heretic the amiable and virtuous Wolff? History, even Protestant history, informs us that it was the extra sanctified divines of Holland? Who was it that steeped their hands in the life-blood of the saviour of the law of countries—the Washington of Holland, the faithful patriot Barneveldt? Who caused him to mount the scaffold at the venerable age of 72 years? Was it not, I would enquire, the divines of the Protestant General Council of Dort, assembled by the command of the slobbering imbecile, and bombastic and conceited pedant, the shame alike of royalty and mankind, King James I. of England.—(Applause). I have noticed these martyrs of science and toleration, to shew to you the cool hypocrisy of these men, who would represent the Church of Rome as alone opposed to the development of the human faculties, whereas in all countries, and at all times, she has shewn herself to be the *Alma Mater* of every science, as every science must necessarily be her submissive handmaid. The oft repeated statement of the Catholic Religion being unfavourable to genius and talent is wholly untrue. The contrary is the fact—a fact capable of being clearly demonstrated. I will take the year 1600, as about that time Protestantism was as complete in England as could be desired. From that time up to the year 1787—one hundred and eighty-seven years—let us examine the number of men remarkable for great powers of mind, which England produced, and compare them with the number of such men produced in the Catholic countries of France and Italy during the same period. From this we would be able to get at a pretty good foundation for judging of the effects of the Catholic Religion, in its influence on knowledge, genius, and what is generally called learning.

I find these numbers ascertained in the *Universal, Historical, Critical, and Bibliographical Dictionary* :—

England, Scotland, and Ireland.	Catholic France.	Popish Italy.
132.	676.	164.

Allow one-third more to the French on account of population, and then, there will remain to them 451 to Protestant England's 132. So that they had man for man three and a half times as much intellect as England. Even the Italian population, though less than England, and *buried in popish ignorance* as it is, surpasses hers in intellect, and all my authorities are Protestant authorities, and therefore not likely to favour the Catholic Religion. With reference to the encouragement given to learning, how does the conduct of the Universal Church contrast with that of Protestant England, as exemplified in the treatment of the professors of the Catholic College of Douay. The splendid Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, established in England when it was Catholic, being closed to her sons, the College of Douay was established in the Netherlands under the influence of Cardinal Allen, for the teaching of Physical Science and Philosophy as well as Theology. In 1793, it was occupied by the infidel soldiery of the French Republic,—like another building dedicated to learning and religion not far from us, it was desecrated into a barrack, and its revenues confiscated. On the conclusion of peace in 1815, the British Government made a successful demand for a restitution of the property so spoliated, on the ground that it belonged to British subjects, and £60,000 was paid into the British Treasury. The late Duke of Wellington had a principal hand in the affair. But it is needless to observe that a subsequent claim made by those properly entitled to compensation was totally disregarded by the British Government, and the £60,000 was expended in embellishing and decorating Buckingham Palace. This spoliation of the spoliators reminds one of the savage in the fable attempting to skin the animal that had been skinned before.

No, the universal Church was born in the cradle of science, in an age the most enlightened and brilliant in the historic page—that splendid Augustan age, which had been preceded by others that had brought letters, arts and philosophy almost to perfection, to the end that Christianity might not be said to have been brought forth in the darkness of ignorance. When, by the invasions of the barbarians, science was nearly destroyed in Europe, who preserved it from utter annihilation? Was it not, to use a trite metaphor, the Church that floated like the ark over the terrible inundation of Vandalic, devastating fury, preserving, and cherishing in her bosom the germs of science and future civilization; and did not science, in an after age, flying from the blood-stained sword of Mahomet the Second, obtain protection from the Roman Pontiffs? “It would be difficult,” says Hallam, the Protestant Historian, “to find a man of high reputation, in modern times who has not reaped benefit directly or through others, from the revival of ancient learning.” “We have,” says he, “the greatest reason to doubt whether without the Italians of those ages it would have ever occurred.” Music, painting, architecture,—all the fine arts, where did they flourish? where receive their highest development? Where do Sculptors go, even at the present day, to draw their inspiration to perfect their acquirements? Oh! yes, I may confidently proclaim the fact that Rome was always that central sun from which emanated those rays of light that dispelled the clouds of ignorance which hung over the nations.

She has won too many trophies—trophies of infinite more value than those which hung around the temple of the Capotoline Jupiter to feel the least concern at the attacks of her pigmy assailants. I may then conclude in the words of the poet whom I quoted before:

“Italia too! Italia looking on thee,

“Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,

“Still

“The fount at which the panting mind assuages

“Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,

“Flows from the Eternal source of Rome’s Imperial hill.”